

DETROIT INTERMODAL FREIGHT TERMINAL PROJECT
Draft Notes
Local Advisory Council Meeting
May 27, 2003, 7:00 p.m.
ACCESS

Purpose: To review the progress of the DIFT particularly to discuss the draft Purpose and Need document.

Attendance: See attached.

Discussion:

Meeting Conduct Procedures

Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that the format of the meeting will be to first allow members of the Local Advisory Council to interact. Then the public will be asked to comment.

Review of the notes of the April 29th meeting

Mohammed Alghurabi asked members of the Local Advisory Council for any comments based upon a review of the notes of the April 29th meeting. There were no comments, and the notes will stand as written.

Response to Requests

Mohammed Alghurabi indicated there were several items requested at the last Advisory Council meeting and information had been provided in the agenda packet on these. The first was the truck counts. Joe Corradino indicated that the six terminals operating in August of 2002 were part of the truck count process. He noted the counts were done for several hours over several days and then averaged. Eventually, the counts were adjusted to an average day in August and an average annual day. The number of trucks were then brought to a total for the year 2002. Joe Corradino also noted that information had been provided through a separate survey of 70 intermodal terminals in North America operated by the four Class I railroads that also operate in Michigan. These data were also provided to the LAC. Each set of information (local as well as national) indicates that the number of truck trips per lift is in the range of about 1½ to 2.

Bill Schrader asked if the information were still current. Joe Corradino indicated that, like all counts, the data need to be adjusted from the time they were taken to make them current. He

noted that additional truck counting would be done over the summer of 2003 to allow for adjusting these data.

Bill Schrader asked for an identification of the Livernois-Junction Yard in the data provided. Joe Corradino indicated that specific identification of a terminal was not possible because of the agreements with the railroads to protect the proprietary nature of the information.

Bill Schrader stated if one yard is expanded to accommodate consolidation of all the region's intermodal activity, there will be a major backup in the roadway system serving that terminal. He further asserted that "if you put all your eggs in one basket, then you run the risk of (terrorist) attacks." Joe Corradino indicated the debate about the risk of terrorism on intermodal activity includes the argument that if consolidation were to occur, an optimal defense system could be established at that one location compared to the situation with multiple terminals. On the issue of traffic backups, Joe Corradino indicated that it has been addressed in the past and will be addressed in the future for both the consolidated terminal and individual terminal options.

Father Redican asked why is intermodal transportation driven by national defense. He also asked about specific data. Joe Corradino responded that he had asked for specific/quantitative information on intermodal traffic that will go through Michigan terminals from the Department of Defense. He noted that information is impossible to come by.

Catharine Jensen indicated that national defense is a systems issue and that road connectors in the national highway system to intermodal terminals are important links for the U.S. Department of Transportation as well as the military. Catharine further stated that there always will be problems with seeking specific information about which military activity is being channeled through an individual terminal.

Father Redican asked if the Department of Defense were the instigators of this project. Joe Corradino responded that the project had not been approached by the Department of Defense.

Olga Savic asked if the terminals in Chicago and around the country are part of the national defense concern. Catharine Jensen indicated that the national defense is a nationwide issue.

Kathryn Savoie asked why national defense is now being included as a need for the project when, for the first 10 years of the DIFT study, it had not been. Catharine Jensen indicated that the absence of national defense earlier should not have been the case. Catharine Jensen further indicated that it is the job of MDOT to look after the public roadway system. One job of that system is to accommodate the movement of freight. That includes military freight and the relationship of the military to rail, particularly intermodal, is evolving and is now a key component to how the military responds to national emergencies.

Victoria Innis indicated that the national defense issue cannot be ignored. She indicated that incorporation of that requirement may provide more funding for the project. She further asserted inclusion of national defense does not hurt the project.

Father Redican indicated that he agrees with Kathryn Savoie that the relationship of national defense and intermodal transportation is new to the DIFT Project. He believes that, in light of recent events, this relationship is worth being more conscious of and does not take away from the overall purpose of the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal Project.

Bill Schrader indicated he wouldn't want the information about the military products that are being shipped through each terminal to be known publicly. He believes that such information will simply draw the terrorists to that specific place or places.

Joe Corradino stated that meetings had been conducted with the city and county agencies on homeland security. A meeting with the U.S. Homeland Security Agency has been requested. But, because of the newness of the group, that meeting will be delayed until the fall of 2003.

Steve Tobocman asked the names of those local homeland security personnel with whom Joe Corradino had met. Joe responded: Shelby Slater from Detroit and Tony Shannon from Wayne County.

Steve Tobocman asked if conflicting goals for a project develop based upon trying to achieve economic gain on the one hand and military defense on the other, who will make the final decision on which alternative is chosen. Joe Corradino indicated that he did not know the answer to that question. However, he indicated that the issue of national defense and economic

gain are so closely tied together, through the private sector's making and shipping of products for the military and industry, that he does not believe the two purposes are conflicting nor will lead to the development of separately preferred alternatives. Furthermore, he indicated that economic gain and national defense are closely tied together, but distinct from homeland security. In that respect, homeland security issues may lead to a different preferred alternative as compared to the economic and national defense issues.

Kathryn Savoie asked if the Department of Defense were involved in the DIFT process. Joe Corradino indicated that both the Michigan Department of Military Affairs and U.S. Department of the Army had been contacted. Conversations have been held with members of the Michigan Department of Military Affairs and with the logistics support group of the U.S. Department of Defense.

Kathryn Savoie asked if environmental protection standards are going to be evaluated in other ways if national defense is part of the project's purpose. Joe Corradino indicated that the National Environmental Policy Act contains the guidance that affects the Department of Defense as well as the project sponsor — the Federal Highway Administration.

External-terminal Issues

Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that railroad issues external to intermodal terminals will be examined in preparing the EIS. He referred to a paper that was included in the packet sent to the LAC prior to the meeting.

Scoping Meeting

Joe Corradino indicated that the latest scoping document, updated to respond to a series of comments including those of the LAC, had been made available at this meeting. It will be the subject of the June 4th scoping meeting.

Father Redican asked if the information developed through the September 19, 2002, scoping meeting, when the Livernois-Junction Yard was the only terminal being examined, would be carried forward. Joe Corradino indicated that it would.

Kathryn Savoie mentioned that at the City Council meeting that was held on May 22nd an issue was raised of greater involvement in the scoping meeting of the Southwest Detroit Business Association, Communities for a Better Rail Alternative, and other advocates for the local communities. She asked whether that request for “a seat at the table” by these groups had been reviewed by MDOT.

Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that a response had not yet been developed as this is a policy matter which requires the involvement of MDOT management.

Father Redican indicated that he believes the request of City Council for community-based groups to be more involved should be taken seriously.

Steve Tobocman asked if it were possible to get an electronic, redline file of the latest purpose and need document so that the changes can be read without having to read the two documents side-by-side. Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that would be looked into.

Olga Savic asked for an explanation of a scoping meeting and its purpose. Joe Corradino indicated that a moderator would conduct the meeting. It would begin with an overview of the NEPA process provided by FHWA. Then, the project’s purpose and need would be discussed as well as key impact issues. At a conclusion of these presentations, comments will be taken from the affected resource agencies and the public as they relate to the project’s purpose, need and issues.

Joe Corradino indicated the purpose of the scoping meeting is to gain comments from agencies that can guide the project from its outset. The guidance provided by the resource agencies is very helpful to ensuring that the EIS will be comprehensive.

Kathryn Savoie asked what happened to the questions that were raised through last year’s scoping meeting. Joe Corradino indicated that the consultant reviewed every comment and developed preliminary responses to them, whether the comment was offered by a state or federal governmental agency or a community-based group.

Bill Schrader asked how far outside of the city the examination of impacts extends. He also asked if the railroads were looking at trackage issues. Joe Corradino indicated that while many of the impacts will be examined at a local level, a broader view would be taken of such issues as travel, air quality and economic impacts which would include at least Wayne and Oakland counties if not the entire 7-county region. Furthermore, he noted that railroad issues were being examined that relate to localized “knots” in the system that restrict the terminals from performing at their design capacity. He noted that issues such as improving track and other maintenance-related items are not part of the project.

Bill Schrader asked what would happen if the EIS results indicate one railroad would benefit more than the others. Joe Corradino indicated that recent direction by FHWA indicates that fewer than four Class I railroads can be affected by the project. He assumes that also means some railroads may benefit more than others as a result of the DIFT.

Other Issues

Father Redican indicated that he was curious about the repaving of Livernois Avenue between Michigan and Vernor. Mohammed Alghurabi stated that he was unaware of the repaving. Victoria Innis volunteered to inquire about the timing of the repaving. Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that he would also address this issue when the next meeting is held with the City. Jim Hartman noted that there is a signalization project for Livernois Avenue that may have been tied to the repaving. The signalization work has been underway for some time.

Public Comment

Josephine Powell asked if greater weight would be given to either the public or agency comments in the EIS process. Mohammed Alghurabi assured her that all comments will be addressed with equal attention.

Josephine Powell asked if the City of Detroit expressed a concern and an individual made a different comment, would more weight be given to the City of Detroit’s concern. Mohammed Alghurabi indicated, in the past, comments received on the DIFT, regardless of the source, were treated with equal attention.

Father Redican indicated that comments dealing with the weight of government vs. individual input was a good one. However, he stressed that if someone presents an “off the wall” comment, no matter who, that it should not demand attention. Nevertheless, it appears to him that there are a lot of ways to get into the DIFT process and that efforts are being made to address all comments.

Steve Tobocman asked if there were a representative of the City of Detroit at the September 2002 scoping meeting. Mohammed Alghurabi indicated there were several but also indicated that official comments had not been provided in writing at this time.

The next meeting is set for July 8th. With that, the meeting ended at 9:00 p.m.

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DETROIT INTERMODAL FREIGHT TERMINAL PROJECT
Local Advisory Council Meeting
May 27, 2003, 7:00 p.m.
ACCESS Cultural Center

Attendance

Name	Representing	Phone
Michelle DeSouza	State Sen. Samuel "Buzz" Thomas	313-871-2400
Greg Gorno	GTSI/Detroit International Assoc.	734-281-1666 x102
Marc Higginbotham	Norfolk Southern Railway	248-351-2670
Victoria C. Inniss	CEO Wayne County	313-224-0852
Karen Kavanaugh	CBRA/SDBA	313-842-0986 x 26
Joe Redican	Holy Redeemer H.S.	313-841-4433
Kathryn Savoie	ACCESS/CBRA	313-216-2225
William E. Schrader	Jeffries-Southfield	313-838-8387
Steve Tobocman	State Representative	517-373-0823
Chuck Tucker	City of Ferndale	248-546-2514
OBSERVERS		
Ari Adler	The Corradino Group	313-964-1926
Mitch Alexander	Resident	313-596-8222 x14
Micki Blashfield	CENTRA Trucking	586-939-7000
Violeta Castanada	Holy Redeemer H.S.	313-849-5496
Joe Corradino	The Corradino Group	313-964-1926
Carissa Daniels	Holy Redeemer	313-318-3778
Jeff Edwards	MDOT Metro Region	248-483-5114
Tim Jenkins	State of Michigan – MDA	313-369-823
Catharine Jensen	MDOT	517-335-3070
Joanna Ladki	ACCESS	313-216-2226
Stephanie Litaker	MDOT Communications	517-373-1036
Frances Nowden	Holy Redeemer	313-623-4160
Bob Parsons	MDOT Public Involvement	517-373-9534
Sherry Piacenti	MDOT	517-373-4152
Josephine Powell	Wayne County Environmental	313-224-2658
Olga Savic	Rep. Steve Tobocman	517-373-0823
Darren Shapiro	Local business	248-506-4233
Uly Simmons	Holy Redeemer H.S.	313-585-5788

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